



HOUSTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Dedicated training results in graduation for 18 fire trainees, tonight

Fire Chief Phil Boriskie will give the Oath of Office to 18 new firefighters during a graduation commencement, tonight, July 12, 2007 at 7 p.m. at the Houston Firefighters' Relief and Retirement Fund Conference Center, 4225 Interwood North Parkway.

These graduating firefighter trainees have been in training since February of last year, attending 10 hour classes, 4 days a week, to become certified firefighter paramedics.

"These trainees' hard work and dedication have earned them the right to be proud of their new career which is dedicated to saving lives and protecting the property of the citizens of Houston," said Boriskie.

According to Captain Jesus Villasana, one of the class' training officers, the tough training consisted of numerous tasks and tests, challenging cadets both mentally and physically. They attended the Houston Community College's EMT and paramedic training for 12 months, and then had rigorous fire school training for five months.

"The cadets were able to gain hands-on experience by actively participating in ambulance ride-outs and emergency calls during EMS training," said Villasana. "Throughout the entire process, cadets were also required to maintain an extensive and rigorous daily fitness program."

In the past, the Houston Fire Department has required all cadets to become certified paramedics. Future hires will go through paramedic training on a voluntary basis. However, according to Captain Lisa Campbell of the HFD Recruiting Office, this requirement is subject to change, based on the needs of the department. HFD aims to hire 240 cadets for the 2008 fiscal year. Three regular fire trainee classes and one fast track class will be offered during 2008.

"This graduating class is the last class to complete training through Houston Community College," said Villasana "Future classes will receive instruction from a different venue."

Houston Fire Department's Assistant Chief William Barry will give special remarks and awards for academic excellence, leadership and physical fitness will be presented to several members of the graduating class.

Houston Fire Department is currently recruiting new applicants for the position of Certified Fire Trainee. A Certified Fire Trainee has already earned the Basic Firefighter Certification and EMT certifications; a Basic Firefighter Trainee has no certifications. For those who qualify, a civil service exam for this position will be offered on July 31, 2007. Applications are available online at www.houstonfire.org under "Employment." The deadline to apply is July 13, 2007. For more information or questions, please contact HFD Recruiting at 713-495-4266.